that I have already ſhewn how the principal *Phænomena* of Electricity may be accounted for, upon the few Principles I have laid down; and however in different Experiments the Effects produced may either be varied, or increaſed, I doubt not but they may all be eaſily accounted for from the ſame Principles; as I ſhall willingly attempt to make appear at ſome more convenient Time, ſhould it be thought neceſſary. In the mean time I have the Pleaſure to ſubſcribe myſelf,

Gentlemen,

Your moſt obedient humble Servant,

John Ellicott.

XII. *A brief account of a Roman* Teſſera, *by Mr.* John Ward *F. R. S. & Prof. Rhetor. Greſh.*

Read March 3. 1747.

THE braſs plate, which accompanies this paper, and has been the occaſion of it, was dug up ſome time ſince at Market-ſtreet in Bedfordſhire; which lies in the Roman road called *Watling-ſtreet*, about five miles on this ſide Dunſtable; and was brought to the *Society* by their worthy Member, *Samuel Clark* Eſq;.

The

The inſcription ingraven on the two ſides is,

TES. DEI. MAR
SEDIARVM

See the TAB.

Which Words may, as I apprehend, be read at length in the following manner:

Teſſera Dei Martis Sediarum.

The firſt abbreviated word TES. I take to ſtand for *Teſſera*, a *dye* or *cube* (*a*), ſo called from the Greek word τέσσαρα or τέσσερα, *four*; reſpect being had to its number of ſides, diſtinct from the two horizontal planes, above and below. And under this conſideration it was diſtinguiſhed from the *Talus*, which being round at each end contained only four planes or faces, whereon it could ſtand, and therefore when thrown had no more than two ſide faces in view. Hence *ludere talis et teſſeris* are ſpoken of by Roman writers as two different games (*b*).

But if this was the firſt and original notion of the word *Teſſera*, it was applied afterwards to many other things; and that not ſo much from a ſimilitude in the figure, as from the relation they bore to ſome other thing, of which they were the ſign or token; as the points, on the upper plane of the dye denoted the good or ill ſucceſs of the caſt. To recite the ſeveral uſes of this word would both be tedious and unneceſſary; and therefore I ſhall mention ſome few only, from which the deſign of this plate may the more eaſily appear.

And

(*a*) *Macrob. In ſomn. Scip. lib.* II. *cap.* 2. (*b*) *Cic. De ſenect. cap.* 16.

And I ſhall begin with the *Teſſera hoſpitalis*, which was either public or private. As to the former, we find among the inſcriptions publiſhed by *Gruter* inſtances of two municipal towns, who put themſelves under the patronage of a Roman governor. And the reciprocal ingagement between them, which was ingraved on two copper plates, in the form of an oblong ſquare, with a pediment at the top, is called in both TESSERA HOSPITALIS (*a*). The deſign of the latter was to cultivate and maintain a laſting freindſhip between private perſons, and their families; and gave a mutual claim to the contracting parties, and their deſcendants, of a reception and kind treatment at each others houſes, as occaſion offered. For which end it was requiſite, that thoſe *Teſſerae* ſhould be ſo contrived, as might beſt preſerve the memory of that tranſaction to poſterity (*b*). And one method of doing this was by dividing one of them lengthwiſe into two equal parts, upon each of which one of the parties wrote his name, and interchanged it with the other. A draught of one made of bone, and ſo divided, may be ſeen in *Thomaſinus*, with the name of the perſon on each part. Upon one of them is,

POLYNICES
ASCANIO. F.

And upon the other,

CLAPHYR
ANDRAE. M. I. F.

The

(*a*) *Pag.* CCCLXII, CCCLXIII, 22. v. 2. 87. (*b*) *Plaut. Pœnul.* v. 1.

The names are writen on the inſide; and when the two parts were put together, they made a cylinder (*a*). From this cuſtom came the proverbial expreſſion, *teſſeram hoſpitalem confringere*; which was applied to thoſe perſons, who violated their engagements (*b*).

The *teſſerae frumentariae* are often mentioned by Roman writers, which were ſmall tallies given by the emperors to the populace at Rome, intitling them to the reception of a certain quantity of corn from the public at ſtated ſeaſons. And thoſe, who were poſſeſſed of them, when they did not want the corn, ſometimes ſold them to others; as we learn from the ſatyriſt, when he ſais:

Summula ne pereat, qua vilis teſſera venit
Frumenti (*c*).

The perſon, who had the inſpection of theſe *teſſerae*, and diſtributed the corn to thoſe, who produced them, ſeems to have been called *teſſerarius*; as *Pignorius* obſerves from a funeral monument, inſcribed SYMPHORO TESSERARIO SER. CAESARIS (*d*). Theſe *teſſerae* were firſt made of wood, as appears from the words of *Pliny*, where treating upon the nature and properties of trees he ſais, *Liguſtra teſſeris utiliſſima* (*e*). But *Fabretti* has publiſhed the draughts of two of them made of ſtone, in the form of cylinders, and of the ſame ſize with the originals. The length of them is ſomewhat ſhort of three inches, the diameter three quarters of an inch, and the following

(*a*) *De teſſer. hoſpital. cap.* 15. (*b*) *Plaut. Ciſtell.* II. I. 29. (*c*) *Juvenal. Sat.* VII. 174. (*d*) *De ſervis, pag.* 318. *ed.* 1674, *oct.* (*e*) *H. N. Lib.* XVI. *cap.* 8. § 31.

lowing inſcriptions cut upon them contain the names of the perſons, to whom they belonged:

TORQVATVS LVPVS
CREOP. D. I. PELORI D. I.

Where D. I. the two laſt letters in each inſcription ſtand, as he ſuppoſes, for *die prima menſis*, the time appointed for receiving the corn (*a*).

There was alſo another ſort of *teſſera*, not much unlike theſe, which intitled perſons to a ſight of the public games and other diverſions; but they are generally made in the form of an oblong ſquare. *Pignorius* has given us the draught of one in his own poſſeſſion, which conſiſted of ivory. Upon one of the ſides is the name PHILOMVSVS PERELI, on the next SPECTAVIT, on the third a *trident*, and upon the fourth a *palm branch* (*b*); the two laſt of which plainly ſhew, that it was given for admiſſion to the combats of the gladiators. Others of them had on different ſides the name of the perſon, with the day, on which the ſhow was exhibited, and the names of the conſuls at that time. Inſtances of theſe may be ſeen in *Thomaſinus*, one of which, as he ſais, was made of yellow glaſs (*c*).

But the *teſſera militaris* moſt frequently occurs in the Roman hiſtorians, which was the ſignal given by the general, or cheif commander of an army, as a direction to the ſoldiers for puting in execution any duty or ſervice required of them. This upon urgent occaſions was only vocal; as for a ſudden march,

(*a*) *Inſcript. antiq. pag.* 530. (*b*) *Ubi ſupra, pag.* 38.
(*c*) *De teſſ. hoſpital. cap.* 15.

march, or an attack upon the enemy. But in ordinary caſes, as for ſeting the watch, taking their diner, or the like, it was writen on a tablet. Tho in either way it was firſt given by the general to the officers next in rank, and from them to the ſubalterns, till it came to the perſon, whoſe province it was to communicate it to the ſoldiers in each company. This tablet was commonly made of wood, as appears from *Polybius*, who calls it ξυλήφιον, *a ſmall piece of wood* (*a*). The ſignal inſcribed upon it was very ſhort, and uſually compriſed in one or two words; as *victoria*, *palma*, *virtus*, *Deus nobiſcum*, *triumphus imperatoris*, mention'd by *Vegetius* (*b*); with many others of the like nature, which may be ſeen in antient writers. The perſon, whoſe office it was to impart the ſignal immediatly to the ſoldiers, is by *Vegetius* called *teſſerarius* (*c*). Hence in *Gruter*'s inſcriptions we meet with AVRE. IANVARIVS. TESSERARIVS. LEG. XIII, and C. GALERIO. C. LIB. AGATHON. TESSERARIO. COH. XII. PRAET. MILITVM, as alſo L. POMPEIO. L. F. POMP. REBVRRO. TESSERARIO. IN. CENTVRIA... (*d*). By which different forms of expreſſion compared together one would be lead to conclude, that every century had its *teſſerarius*, from whom the ſoldiers immediatly received the ſignal; and that when the legion or cohort only is mentioned, the meaning is not, that the perſon named in the inſcription performed that office

(*a*) *Lib.* VI. *pag.* 479. *ed. Pariſ.* (*b*) *Lib.* III. *cap.* 5.
(*c*) *Lib.* II. *cap.* 7. (*d*) *Pag.* DCVI. 10. DCVIII. 7. DCIX. 10.

office to the whole legion or cohort, but only to ſome particular century in each of them.

But beſides theſe civil and military *teſſerae* there were others, which more eſpecially related to religious affairs, and may therefore be called ſacred; to which the inſcription on this braſs plate ſeems to agree. For the two next words ingraven upon it, namely DEI. MAR. muſt, I think, ſtand for *Dei Martis*. And if the laſt word SEDIARVM be taken for the name of a town, called *Sediae*, this *teſſera* may reſpect the *God Mars*, as the tutelar deity of that place. The religious worſhip among the Romans conſiſted cheifly in ſacrifices and other public ceremonies, the expenſe of which in particular places was ſupported either by the contributions of the inhabitants, or by private gifts. We have an inſtance of the latter in an inſcription firſt publiſhed by *Reineſius*, where it is ſaid, that *L. Veratius Feliciſſimus*, (*a*) patron of *Tolentium*, (or *Tollentium* a municipal town in *Italy*) gave to the inhabitants their annual ſacrifices, which were offered on the eleventh of May for a plentiful harveſt. That inſcription is cut on a braſs plate in the form of an oblong ſquare, with a female buſt in a pediment at the top, deſigned very probably to repreſent the deity, to whom they addreſſed. As the inſcription is peculiar in its kind, I ſhall here give the whole of it, as it ſtands in *Reineſius*.

TESSERAM.

(*a*) *Grut. Pag.* CXCIV. 2.

TESSERAM. PAGANICAM
L. VERATIVS. FELICISSI
MVS. PATRONVS. PAGANIS
PAGI ♁TOLENTINES
HOSTIAS. LVSTR. ET. TESSER.
AER. EX. VOTO. L. DD
V. ID. MAIAS. FELICIT. (*a*)

This is called *teſſera paganica*, as I imagine, from its intitling the *pagani*, or inhabitants of that town, to the annual claim of the ſacrifices therein mentioned. And ſo far it agreed with the nature of a public *teſſera*, which being lodged in the hands of the proper officer, authorized him to collect the ſeveral contributions aſſigned for ſuch religious purpoſes. And of this latter ſort I take the plate to have been, which makes the ſubject of our preſent inquiry; both the form and ſize of it ſuiting very well with ſuch a deſign, as it was portable, and ready to be produced, if occaſion required. And agreably to this notion of the word *teſſera* the antient *Gloſſaries* interpret *teſſerarius* by γραμματευς, a *ſcribe* or *clerk*.

As to the following word SEDIARVM, tho it no where elſe occurs, that I know of; yet this, I preſume, can be no juſt objection againſt its being taken here for the name of a town, called *Sediae*: when it is conſidered, how many inſtances of the like nature are to be found in the inſcriptions collected by *Gruter* and others, which give us the names

(*a*) *Append. num.* 8.

names of many antient places in the Roman provinces not mentioned by any other writers. And beſides, the form of this word appears analogous to the names of ſeveral other Roman towns here in Britain; as, *Durobrovae* Rocheſter, *Ratae* Leiceſter, *Rutupiae* Richborough, *Spinae* Spene, and ſome others. It is not improbable, that this plate was found not far from the place, whoſe name it bears; and which might be ſituated among the *Cateuchlani*, as their territories are deſcribed by Camden (*a*). But as I have never before ſeen, nor heard of any thing ſimilar to it, I would ſubmit what is here offered to the judgement of the curious in theſe inquiries.

G. C. Feb. 25. 1747.

John Ward.

XIII. *An Account of a very learned* Divine, *who was born with* two Tongues; *communicated to the* Royal Society *by* Cromwell Mortimer *M. D.* & Secr. R. S.

Read March 10. 1747.

IN a MS. Account of the Life of the Rev. Mr. *Henry Wharton*, Chaplain to Archbiſhop *Sancroft*, written by himſelf, I have met with the following Paſſage:

" Mihi quidem ex utero materno exeunti duplex " erat Lingua, utraque ejuſdem figuræ ac magnitudinis; " inferiorem exſcindendam eſſe clamarunt mulieres " obſtetrices.

(*a*) *Britann. pag.* 275, *ed.* 1607.

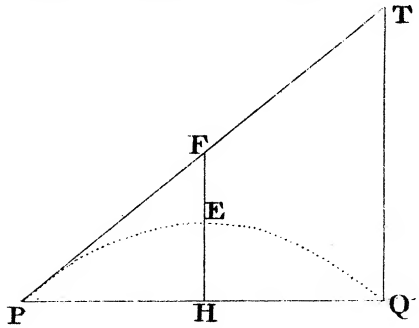


Fig. 1. p. 139.

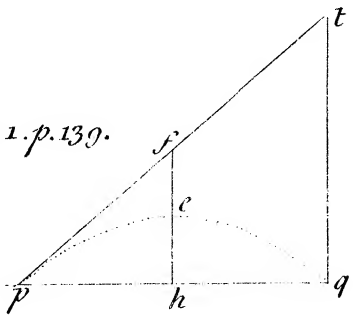


Fig. 2. p. 142.

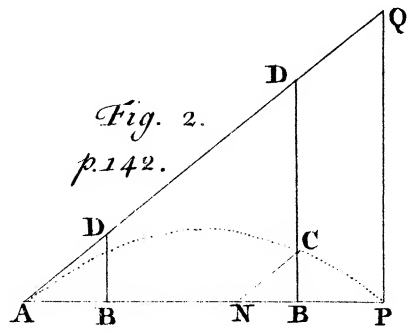


Fig. 3. p. 142.

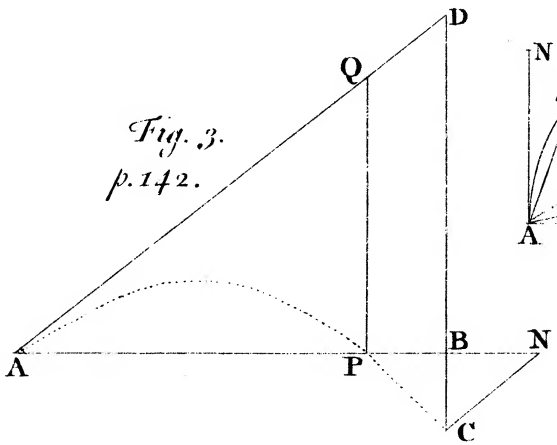


Fig. 4. p. 143.

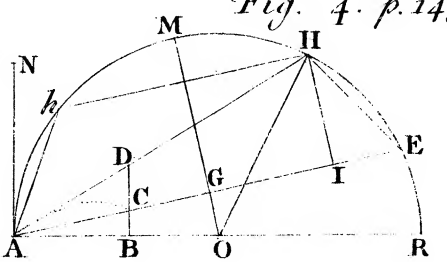


Fig. 5.

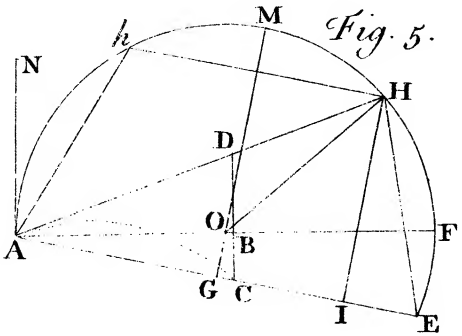
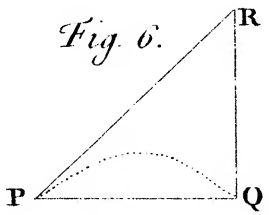
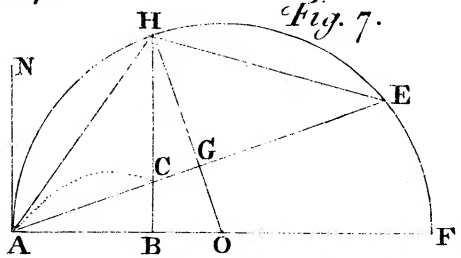


Fig. 6.



p. 146.

Fig. 7.



TES ▲ DEI ▲ MAR

p. 225.

SEDIARVM

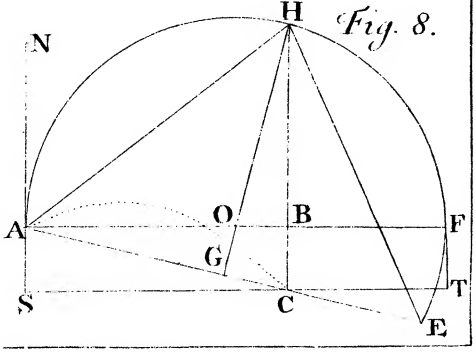



Fig. 8.